

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 12096 032044 Z

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 MC-02 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-20 IGA-02

OMB-01 ACDA-19 GAC-01 IO-12 RSR-01 /183 W

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R 031625 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9762

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 12096

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, LY, FR, EG

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF LIBYAN MIRAGES

REF: A) PARIS 11487 (NOTAL) B) PARIS 11550 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT STATED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MAY 2, THAT GOF HAD RECEIVED NO PROOF OF TRANSFER OF LIBYAN MIRAGES TO EGYPT AND HAD RECEIVED FORMAL DENIAL OF TRANSFER FROM BOTH LIBYAN AND EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENTS. SIMULTANEOUSLY, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR BEN NATAN REITERATED CHARGES OF CONCLUSIVE ISRAELI EVIDENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MAY 2, GOVERNMENT PARTY (UDR) DEPUTY KRIEG ASKED WHETHER MIRAGES SOLD BY FRANCE TO LIBYA HAD BEEN PUT AT DISPOSITION OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY. FOREIGN MINISTER
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PAGE 02 PARIS 12096 032044 Z

JOBERT REPLIED BY NOTING GOF STATEMENT OF APRIL 26 THAT GOF HAD AS YET NO CONFIRMATION OF RUMORS AND HAD NOT RECEIVED ANY INFORMATION TO JUSTIFY ANXIETIES WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED. SITUATION REMAINED THE SAME. A FORTIORI, THEREFORE, GOF DID NOT INTEND TO CONFIRM THAT AIRCRAFT HAD OR HAD NOT BEEN PUT AT DISPOSITION OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY.

3. JOBERT WENT ON TO ELABORATE EXISTING GOVERNMENT POLICY, NOTING THAT 1969 AGREEMENT WITH LIBYA HAD CERTAIN PRECISE STIPULATIONS, PARTICULARLY THAT EQUIPMENT WAS NOT TO BE DIVERTED FROM ITS NORMAL USE, THAT IS DEFENSE OR DISSUASIVE, IN ORDER TO AGGRAVATE TENSION AND INCREASE RISKS OF HOSTILITY. JOBERT CITED CHABAN- DELMAS STATEMENT OF JANUARY 1970 THAT FRENCH POLICY WAS NOT TO NOURISH ARMED CONFLICT. HE ALSO CITED 1972 STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY OF STATE DE LIPKOWSKI AND FORMIN SCHUMANN AS EVIDENCE OF GOF CONCERN THAT UNDERTAKINGS BE RESPECTED. IN PARTICULAR, HE NOTED NOVEMBER 16, 1972, SCHUMANN STATEMENT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY UNDERLINING FRENCH INTEREST IN BEING PRESENT IN LIBYA AT ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING THAT OF MILITARY AID IN ORDER THAT " THIS AFRICAN AND MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRY NOT BE FORCED TO TURN TO VERY POWERFUL COUNTRIES." JOBERT DISCLOSED THAT SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE SCHUMANN STATEMENT FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN TRIPOLI HAD REMINDED GOL OF REQUIREMENTS OF FRENCH EMBARGO POLICY. SIMILARLY, DURING VISIT OF LIBYAN PM JULLAD IN NOVEMBER 1972, GOF HAD INQUIRED ABOUT INTENTIONS OF GOL AND HAD REITERATED GOF POSITION.

4. JOBERT ADDED THAT IT WAS EVIDENT THE AIRCRAFT WERE NOT INTENDED TO REMAIN ON GROUND NOR TO FLY IN CIRCLES AROUND A PARTICULAR AIRBASE. THEIR MOVEMENTS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY AT ROOT OF PRESSING DEMARCHES WHICH HAS RECENTLY BEEN MADE TO GOF. GOF EVIDENTLY PREOCCUPIED TO VERIFY POSSIBLE GROUNDS FOR THEM. GOF, HE SAID, HAD APPROACHED TWO GOVERNMENTS OF CAIRO AND TRIPOLI AND HAD ASKED IF ALLEGATIONS WERE WELL FOUNDED. BOTH HAVE FORMALLY REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE. IN OTHER WORDS, HE CONCLUDED, TO THIS DAY NOTHING HAS PERMITTED GOF TO CONCLUDE THAT AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED. TO DATE, GOF HAS RECEIVED NEITHER PROOF NOR JUSTIFICATION.

5. WHEN ASKED IN SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS HOW UNION OF LIBYA AND EGYPT WOULD AFFECT FRENCH POLICY, JOBERT DODGED ANSWER
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PAGE 03 PARIS 12096 032044 Z

SAYING THAT " SUFFICIENT FOR THE DAY IS THE VIL THEREOF," AND SUGGESTING THAT AT THAT TIME FRENCH RESPONSE WOULD BE PRAGMATIC AND NOT CARTESIAN.

6. ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH JOBERT' S SPEECH CAME STATEMENTS BY ISRAELI AMBASSADOR BEN NATAN. SPEAKING TO THE DIPLOMATIC PRESS CORPS ON MAY2, HE REITERATED CHARGES THAT GOI HAD

PROOF THAT ON " A CERTAIN DAY A CERTAIN NUMBER " OF LIBYAN MIRAGES WERE IN EGYPT. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE PLANES HAD RETURNED TO THEIR BASES AS CERTAIN RECENT STORIES HAD SUGGESTED. ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTRY, HE ADDED, WOULD NOT HAVE SPOKEN WITHOUT BEING ABSOLUTELY SURE.

7. COMMENT: FRENCH PRESS AND PUBLIC CONTINUE TO REGARD GOF DENIALS WITH CERTAIN SKEPTICISM. AS FIGARO COMMENTS IN ITS MAY 3 ISSUE, MIRAGES EVIDENTLY COULD HAVE LANDED AT EGYPTIAN BASES IN COURSE OF AN OFFICIAL VISIT OR DURING TRAINING FLIGHTS, WITHOUT HAVING BEEN PUT AT THE DISPOSITION OF THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE. THAT, IT SAYS, IS MOST FAVORABLE HYPOTHESIS. AS INDICATED REF B, DCM WILL BE DISCUSSING MATTER WITH QUAI DIRECTOR DE COMMUNES IN CONTEXT OVERALL MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. APPOINTMENT NOW SCHEDULED FOR AFTERNOON, MAY 8, AND WE WOULD HOPE EMBASSY COULD BE KEPT INFORMED ON PRIORITY BASIS OF ANY INFORMATION WHICH WOULD AFFECT HIS DISCUSSION.
IRWIN

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED USINT CAIRO.

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LONDON
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SECSTATE WASHDC
TEL AVIV
TRIPOLI

TUNIS

Type: TE

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